

Message Text

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ACTION ARA-14

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 ICAE-00 INRE-00
CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00 PA-02 SP-02 SS-15
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FM AMEMBASSY ASUNCION

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3479

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TAGS PEPR, SHUM, PA

SUBJECT: AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT AT PRESS MEETING JULY 12

THERE FOLLOWS THE TEXT OF THE AMBASSADOR'S STATEMENT:

BEGIN TEXT. "THERE IS AN OLD SAYING THAT IT IS BETTER TO BE HATED
FOR WHAT YOU ARE THAN LOVED FOR WHAT YOU ARE NOT. AS A DIPLOMAT
IN THE CARTER ADMINISTRATION I AM BECOMING ACUTELY AWARE OF THE
SIGNIFICANCE OF THAT PHRASE.

"I APPRECIATE THE PRESENCE OF SUCH A DISTINGUISHED GROUP OF
NEWSMEN WHO HAD THE KINDNESS TO RESPOND TO MY INVITATION.

"GENTLEMEN: I HAVE INVITED YOU TO JOIN ME TO CLARIFY CERTAIN
MATTERS WHICH HAVE OCCURED WITHIN THE LAST FEW DAYS, CASTING A
SHADOW OVER THE GOOD RELATIONS WHICH HAVE ALWAYS EXISTED BETWEEN OUR
TWO COUNTRIES, SINCE THE TIME OF PRESIDENT HAYES.

"FIRST, I WOULD LIKE TO CLARIFY ONE ASPECT OF THE HUMAN RIGHTS
POLICY OF THE UNITED STATES. IT IS OUR POSITION THAT ALL THE SIGNA-
TORIES OF THE UN CHARTER, ALL THE MEMBERS OF THE ORGANIZATION OF
AMERICAN STATES, HAVE PLEDGED THEMSELVES TO RESPECT HUMAN RIGHTS.
THUS, NO MEMBER OF THE UN OR THE OAS CAN CLAIM THAT MISTREAT-
MENT OF ITS CITIZENS IS SOLELY ITS OWN AFFAIR. ACCORDINGLY --
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AND THIS IS IMPORTANT -- NO MEMBER OF THE UN, NO MEMBER OF THE
OAS, CAN AVOID ITS RESPONSIBILITIES TO SPEAK OUT WHEN ARBITRARY
ARREST OR TORTURE OCCURS. SINCE 1945 INTERNATIONAL PRACTICE
HAS CONFIRMED THAT A NATION'S OBLIGATION TO RESPECT HUMAN
RIGHTS IS A MATTER OF CONCERN UNDER INTERNATIONAL LAWS.

" THERE ARE A FEW COUNTRIES IN THE WORLD THAT DENY THIS

INTERPRETATION. I REFER SPECIFICALLY TO THE COMMUNIST STATES OF RUSSIA AND CHINA AND THEIR SATELLITES. IT IS INTERESTING TO NOTE THAT THE UNITED STATES IS UNDER ATTACK FROM THE SOVIET UNION BECAUSE WE HAVE EXPRESSED OUR CONCERN FOR THE WELL BEING OF THEIR DISSIDENTS ANATOLY SHCHARANSKY AND ALEXANDER GINZBURG.

"I WOULD ALSO LIKE TO POINT OUT THAT THE UNITED STATES CONDEMNS TERRORISM AND VIOLENCE UNEQUIVOCALLY. BUT IF TERRORISM AND VIOLENCE IN THE NAME OF DISSENT CANNOT BE DEFENDED, NEITHER CAN VIOLENCE THAT IS OFFICIALLY SANCTIONED.

"MY GOVERNMENT TAKES ITS STAND IN FAVOR OF HUMAN RIGHTS BOTH BECAUSE IT IS RIGHT AND BECAUSE IT IS IN ACCORD WITH THE IDEALS OF OUR WESTERN TRADITION. IN MANY COUNTRIES OF THE WORLD PEOPLE ARE HEARTENED BY OUR INITIATIVES. EVEN IN NATIONS WHERE THE GOVERNMENT MAY INFLICT OR PERMIT HUMAN RIGHTS ABUSES, THERE ARE GOOD PEOPLE IN OFFICIAL CIRCLES WHO WANT TO DO WHAT IS RIGHT AND THEY LOOK TO US FOR ENCOURAGEMENT.

"AS SOON AS I WAS INFORMED OF THE STRANGE DISAPPEARANCE OF DR. LAINO, I ADVISED WASHINGTON. I RECEIVED IMMEDIATE INSTRUCTIONS TO EXPRESS OUR CONCERN TO THE PARAGUAYAN GOVERNMENT. IT IS IMPORTANT TO NOTE THAT AT THAT TIME BOTH THE NATIONAL AUTHORITIES AND THE PARAGUAYAN EMBASSY IN WASHINGTON HAD DENIED ANY KNOWLEDGE OF THE INCIDENT.

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"DURING THE HOURS FOLLOWING THE DISAPPEARANCE OF DR. LAINO, WHO HAD RETURNED FROM WASHINGTON THE PREVIOUS DAY HAVING BEEN INVITED NOT BY MY GOVERNMENT BUT BY THE WASHINGTON OFFICE ON LATIN AMERICA, A CIVIC-RELIGIOUS ORGANIZATION IN DEFENSE OF HUMAN RIGHTS, I WAS INFORMED THAT MRS. LAINO WAS TRYING TO REACH ME. I TRIED TO TELEPHONE HER BUT THE NUMBER WAS OUT OF ORDER. I THEREFORE VISITED THE FAMILY TO EXPRESS MY REGRET AND MY CONCERN.

"A NUMBER OF UNFORTUNATE INTERPRETATIONS OF MY ACTS HAVE NOT CONTRIBUTED TO MAINTAINING THE CLOSE RELATIONSHIP EXISTING BETWEEN OUR TWO COUNTRIES. THESE HONEST AND OPEN RELATIONS ARE TARNISHED BY INSULTS NOT ONLY AGAINST ME PERSONALLY BUT AGAINST MY COUNTRY, ITS PEOPLE, AND THE FOREIGN POLICY OF MY GOVERNMENT.

"IT IS MY UNDERSTANDING THAT A DIPLOMAT IS FREE NOT ONLY TO MAINTAIN CONTACT WITH OFFICIALS OF THE GOVERNMENT AND MEMBERS OF THE GOVERNING PARTY, BUT ALSO WITH OPPOSITION GROUPS IN ORDER THAT HE MAY BE INFORMED OF THE REALITIES OF THE COUNTRY IN WHICH HE CARRIES OUT HIS FUNCTIONS.

"ONCE THE NATIONAL AUTHORITIES ADMITTED THAT THE POLICE HAD

DETAINED DR. LAINO FOR REASONS UNKNOWN I, FOLLOWING INSTRUCTIONS FROM THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, EXPRESSED TO THE FOREIGN MINISTER, DR. ALBERTO NOGUES, THE CONCERN OF MY GOVERNMENT OVER THE ARREST OF THE LIBERAL RADICAL AUTENTICO LEADER.

"YESTERDAY MORNING DR. ALBERTO NOGUES ASKED FOR MY COLLABORATION IN EASING THE TENSIONS CAUSED BY MISUNDERSTANDINGS. I PROMISED DR. NGUES ALL MY COOPERATION IN CALMING MATTERS AND WORKING TOWARDS A REASONABLE SOLUTION.

"THE RESPONDS TO MY OFFER OF GOODWILL IS PUBLIC KNOWLEDGE. EVERYONE KNOWS ABOUT THE INCIDENTS LAST NIGHT IN FRONT OF THE EMBASSY WHERE DEMONSTRATORS RENEWED THEIR INSULTS.

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"IN ITS LENGTHY RELATIONS WITH PARAGUAY MY GOVERNMENT HAS ALWAYS ATTEMPTED NOT ONLY TO MAINTAIN A STRONG AND IMPROVING RELATIONSHIP BUT ALSO TO ASSIST THE GOVERNMENT IN THE DEVELOPMENT OF PARAGUAY.

"WHEN PRESIDENT CARTER DESIGNATED ME AS AMBASSADOR TO THE GOVERNMENT OF PARAGUAY, I CAME WITH THE EXPRESS ASSIGNMENT FROM MR. CARTER TO STRENGTHN OUR CORDIAL FRIENDSHIP, AND I HAVE ALWAYS TRIED TO HONOR THAT MANDATE. I CONTINUE ON THAT COURSE. I HOOE THAT IN THE FUTURE WE WILL NOT HASTILY PREJUDGE PROBLEM SITUATIONS FOR THIS DOES NOT HELP TO MAINTAIN THE FRIENDSHIP OF OUR PEOPLES; BUT TENDS TO CORRODE ITS DEEP AND STRONG FOUNDATIONS." END TEXT
WHITE

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BEGIN TEXT. "THERE IS AN OLD SAYING THAT IT IS BE
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